Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application.

1. **(Currently Amended)**. An electronic message configured to be communicated between a sender's device and a recipient's device, the electronic message comprising:

a sound file attached to the electronic message; and,

a predetermined identifier attached to the electronic message and ,–associated with the sound file, that both distinguishes said sound file from other files attached to the message and indicates a course of action to be taken by the recipient's device with said sound file;

based on said course of action indicated by said predetermined identifier, said recipient's device is configured to selectively convert a content of the electronic message from text to voice using one of said sound file and/or a locally stored voice sample;

the recipient's device is configured to selectively play said sound file and/or said converted content of the electronic message.

2. (Original). The method of Claim 1 wherein said sound file contains at least one word in a sender's voice.

3. (Original). The method of Claim 1 wherein said sound file contains at least one word in a computer simulated voice.

4. (Original). The method of Claim 1 wherein said sound file contains at least one word in a computer simulated voice and at least one word in a sender's voice.

5. (Original). The method of Claim 1 wherein the predetermined identifier is a specific file name associated with said sound file.

6. (Original). The method of Claim 1 wherein the predetermined identifier is an information tag.

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7. (Previously Presented). The method of Claim 6 wherein the information tag is embedded in a header of the electronic message.

8. (**Currently Amended**). A method for sending an electronic message from a sender's device to a recipient's device, the method comprising the steps of:

attaching a sound file to an the electronic message; and,

associating a predetermined identifier with said sound file and attaching said sound file to the electronic message, which both said predetermined identifier distinguishes said sound file from other files attached to the e-mail and which indicates a course of action to be taken by said recipient's device with said sound file;

based on said course of action indicated by said predetermined identifier, selectively converting a content of the electronic message from text to voice using one of said sound file and/or a locally stored voice sample;

selectively playing said sound file and/or said converted content of the electronic message.

9. (Previously Presented). The method of Claim 8 wherein said attaching is performed by the sender's device.

10. (Original). The method of Claim 8 wherein said attaching is automatic.

11. (Previously Presented). The method of Claim 8 wherein said attaching is performed by an adjunct to the sender's device.

12. (Original). The method of Claim 8 wherein said attaching is performed by an e-mail server.

13. (Previously Presented). The method of Claim 8 wherein said attaching is performed by the recipient's device.

14. (Original). The method of Claim 8 wherein said sound file contains at least one word in a sender's voice.

15. (Original). The method of Claim 14 wherein said sound file further contains at least one word in a computer simulated voice.

16. (Original). The method of Claim 8 wherein said sound file contains at least one word in a computer simulated voice.

17. (Original). The method of Claim 8 wherein the predetermined identifier is an information tag.

18. (Previously Presented). The method of Claim 17 wherein the information tag is embedded in a header of the electronic message.

19. (Previously Presented). The method of Claim 18 wherein the information tag is embedded by the sender's device.

20. (Previously Presented). The method of Claim 18 wherein the information tag is embedded by an adjunct to the sender's device.

21. (Original). The method of Claim 18 wherein the information tag is embedded by an e-mail server.

22. (Previously Presented). The method of Claim 18 wherein the information tag is embedded by the recipient's device.

23. (Original). The method of Claim 18 where said attaching is selectively performed by a sending party.

24. (**Currently Amended**). A method for announcing electronic messages, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving an electronic message with an attached sound file;

noting the presence of a predetermined identifier attached to the electronic message, wherein said predetermined identifier that distinguishes said sound file from other files attached to the electronic message; and,

based on a course of action indicated by said predetermined identifier, selectively converting a content of the electronic message from text to voice using one of said sound file and/or a locally stored voice sample; and

selectively playing the attached said sound file and/or said converted content of the electronic message in response to the noting of the predetermined identifier.

25. (Original). The method of Claim 24 further comprising receiving at least one more electronic message with an attached sound file and playing said at least one more sound file.

26. (Original). The method of Claim 24 wherein said sound file contains at least one word in a sender's voice.

27. (Original). The method of Claim 24 wherein said sound file contains at least one word in a computer simulated voice.

28. (Original). The method of Claim 24 wherein said sound file contains at least one word in a computer simulated voice and at least one word in a sender's voice.

29. (Original). The method of Claim 24 wherein noting the presence of a predetermined identifier includes noting the presence of an information tag.

30. (Previously Presented). The method of Claim 29 wherein the information tag regarding the sound file is embedded in a header of the electronic message.

31. (Original). The method of Claim 30 wherein the information tag is embedded by a sender computer.

32. (Original). The method of Claim 30 wherein the information tag is embedded by an adjunct to a computer at a sending party's end.

33. (Original). The method of Claim 30 wherein the information tag is embedded by an e-mail server.

34. (Original). The method of Claim 30 wherein the information tag is embedded by a recipient computer.

35. **(Cancelled).**

36. (Original). The method of Claim 24 where said playing is performed at a recipient computer.

37. (Original). The method of Claim 24 where said playing is performed at a recipient customer premise equipment.

38. (Original). The method of Claim 24 where said playing is performed at a recipient voice mail.

39. **(Cancelled).**

40. **(Currently Amended).** The method of Claim [[39]]24 where said converting is performed at an e-mail server.

41. **(Currently Amended).** The method of Claim [[39]]24 where said converting is performed at a recipient computer.

42. (**Currently Amended**). The method of Claim [[39]]24 where said converting is performed at an adjunct to a computer at the receiving party's end.

43. (**Currently Amended**). The method of Claim [[39]]24 where said converting is performed at a voice messaging system.

44. (**Cancelled**).

45. (**Currently Amended**). The method of Claim [[39]]24 further comprising transferring said voice message to a voice-mail box.